

Advisory Committee Views on the Public Review Draft

Message to Readers: California Water Plan Update 2005, the 8th since 1957, comprehensively reviews the state's water problems and opportunities. Like California, the plan update has changed since 1957. A growing population, increased pressures on our natural environment, concerns about drinking water quality, costs, and many unknowns including climate change are now water planning considerations.

A diverse group of people assisted in developing the plan by serving on an Advisory Committee. The group represented organizations and interests concerned with water resources management. Some of us, including Native Americans and environmental justice groups, had not been represented in past advisory committees. Knowing the plan was DWR's, not ours, we shared suggestions and concerns and posed tough questions. We served as advisors.

As a group, we agreed on many things, but not everything. We expected this. This pamphlet explains the things we mostly agreed about and describes the tensions where we do not.

We encourage you to read the Public Review Draft thoroughly, participate in the public review process, and offer your comments. This solid planning effort deserves your attention.

Areas of Substantial Agreement among Advisory Committee Members

1. Using a different approach than in the past. The plan was developed with a large, diverse, and vocal Advisory Committee and extended public involvement. Computer technology helped DWR keep Advisory Committee members and the public up-to-date and informed. Activities and information related to the plan can easily be found at <http://www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/>
2. Using the document as both a policy guiding strategic plan and a source of technical information. The Advisory Committee felt a strategic plan, as opposed to a pure technical plan, would help Californians better plan and assess state water management.
3. The Advisory Committee found a need for more information than is now available. We worked with DWR to create a phased work plan. The plan meets most legislative requirements and outlines a schedule to develop improved analytical tools and data. Most desired work will be completed as part of a 3-phase work plan. The group believes this will help DWR meet Water Code requirements in the next update. The information will also help local and regional agencies with integrated water resource planning and management. Phased work plan details are found on page 1-5 of Volume 1: Strategic Plan.
4. The plan includes important new features:
 - More complete and detailed information on actual water flows than were available in previous plans. Called water portfolios, water use categories and water supply information span a full hydrologic cycle (wet, dry and average).

- Use of historic data instead of projections based on non-agricultural trends. This information creates an appreciation for California's complex and variable water flows.
 - Regional analysis and reports identify unique challenges and specific ongoing programs and plans. Water management is mostly local and regional. Regional reports allow a clearer focus on these problems, within a statewide context.
 - Multiple future scenarios (recognizing that uncertainty over the next 30 years makes a single, likely future impossible to present). Numerous events and choices, many unrelated to water planning, may drive the future.
 - A focus on integrated regional water management as a key strategy and use of a full range of water management tools. There is no single solution to California's water problems. Local, regional, and statewide integration of multiple solutions will be required.
5. Clear mission and vision statements, five high-level goals, fourteen recommendations, and specific action items for each of the fourteen recommendations. Other strong points are identification of implementation challenges, as well as performance measures to track progress. This provides a strategic roadmap. It is a call to action.
 6. Clear statements on essential support activities. The plan calls on the state to provide leadership, establish credible and reliable financing mechanisms, clarify the authorities and responsibilities of different entities in the water community, invest in water technology, and ensure that equitable decisions are made to provide for fair treatment of low-income people and disadvantaged communities of color in California. One goal is better application of environmental justice criteria and greater inclusion of underserved communities in planning and decision making, with special sensitivity to the unique obligations to Native American communities.
 7. Clear links to CALFED, recognizing the important role the CALFED Bay-Delta Program and its solution principles in California water issues.
 8. The importance of water quality to protecting California's waters.
 9. Incorporation of information from the state's *General Plan Guidelines* to promote a better link between water supply planning and local land use planning.
 10. Presents a good balance between data and policies.
 11. The plan outlines methods for data analysis and scenario development to be used in future updates.

Areas of Disagreement among Advisory Committee Members

Sometimes the Advisory Committee did not agree with DWR or one another on various aspects of the plan. The following explains these tensions.

1. The update calls for new surface storage, linked to the CalFed program. The group disagrees about the utility, cost-effectiveness, and need for additional surface storage and whether adequate water supply can be provided by the measures included in the . Some believe there is a need for more storage than the plan recommends while others believe water conservation and efficiency are much better alternatives than expanding infrastructure. The group also disagreed as to how much ecological damage occurs and/or should be tolerated in development of additional water supply.
2. Some believe the plan underestimates implementation challenges and suggest more evaluation is needed.
3. It has been difficult for DWR to address the sometimes-competing interests of the Advisory Committee members. To some extent this represents different philosophical approaches to dealing with California water problems.
4. There is disagreement about the contribution of agriculture to the overall water efficiency estimates for 2030. Some believe the estimates for water savings for agriculture appear very low. Others believe the agricultural industry has already voluntarily adopted efficiencies shown to improve return on investment, and/or that agriculture is very efficient now within nearly all hydrologic regions due to extensive re-use of agricultural return flows.
5. There are disagreements over some important details. There is a series of legal requirements for the document contained in the California Water Code. One law requires the CA Department of Food and Agriculture to complete a study, and this did not happen. The plan should consider the relationship between agricultural water supply and the future per capita food supply. DWR will do this analysis after they receive the required agricultural forecast study. For DWR's interim response to that legislative requirement, see the Volume 4: Reference Guide article entitled "Future Food Production and Consumption in California Under Alternative Scenarios" by the University of California Agricultural Issues Center.

Another law requires DWR to provide a gap analysis of predicted water need versus predicted available water. Given the potential for multiple options, the plan instead addresses the multiple uncertainties and recommends more complex modeling and other analytical tests than now available. The plan also outlines development of future water use and water supply scenarios. This approach does not necessarily meet all legal requirements for this document.

6. Some believe the plan pushes too hard for market-based solutions to allocating or deciding who gets water when the supply cannot meet all demands. Some believe this

could preclude agriculture or the environment from receiving water. Others suggest the plan needs to address long-term socioeconomic issues associated with water transfers. Still others believe changes could compromise historic public legal water rights. The plan needs to address long-term socioeconomic issues associated with water transfers and not merely ignore these issues.

7. Some contend DWR's data as presented in the plan support approaches that are less infrastructure-intensive in nature and feel that the plan is deficient for not including a third *Initiative for Reliability* that directs the state to actively pursue those approaches. Several others think that the numbers underestimate the potential of water use efficiency approaches. The data and analyses for water use efficiency in the plan are the subject of much debate (as are all the numbers).

Uncertainties in the Plan

1. In the current financial environment, funding at the federal, state and local levels is severely restricted. The consequences of insufficient funding for the recommended actions are serious.
2. In the plan, actions to sustain water supply reliability are directed by local water agencies, but the plan does not identify mechanisms to enforce or induce action.
3. While the focus on integrated regional water management is positive, the document does not address how interregional conflicts will be handled. Nor does it address how the state will provide leadership to support and oversee the regional process.
4. The update relies in part on the beneficiaries of water being the primary funders of new infrastructure. There is no definition of "beneficiary." There is a need to outline how the "beneficiaries pay" principle is to be implemented.
5. Some express concern that the plan does not address how regions will determine if they will collectively develop enough water both to meet the water needs of their local population and to produce food and other commodities needed by humanity at large.
6. There is no specific mechanism to measure whether or not implementation of the plan or individual recommendations was successful.
7. The scenarios will need more development for decision makers to determine viability of the proposed options.